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whilst the enraged snake darted his head in all directions, but in vain: thus suspended, he has not the power to round himself so as to seize hold of his tormentor. He exhausted himself in vain exertions, when the snake catcher descended the bank, dropped him into the empty basket, and closed the lid: he then began to play, and after a short time raised the lid of the basket, when the snake darted about wildly, and attempted to escape; the lid was shut down again quickly, the music always playing. This was repeated two or three times; and in a very short interval, the lid being raised, the snake sat on his tail, opened his hood, and danced quite as quietly as the tame snakes in the other basket, nor did he again attempt to escape. This, having witnessed it with my own eyes, I can assert as a fact."

I particularly request the attention of my readers to the foregoing account, as, from the circumstance of its having been furnished by an eye-witness, and a man whose public station and known character were sufficient to command belief in his veracity, it will prove serviceable to me by and bye, when I shall endeavour to disprove the ridiculous assertions of Abbé Dubois* and others, who hold that serpent-charming is a mere imposition, and assert, certainly without a shade of warranty for so doing, that the serpents are in these cases always previously tamed, and deprived of their poisonbags and fangs, when they are let loose in certain situations for the purpose of being artfully caught again, and represented as wild snakes, subdued by the charms of their pipe. I shall, however, say no more at present of Dubois, Deuon, or others who are sceptical on this subject, but shall leave the refutation of their fanciful opinions to another opportunity—my present purpose being the establishment of *facts*, ere I venture to advance a theory.

I shall therefore conclude my present paper, and in my next, besides adducing many other important facts relative to serpent-charming, shall endeavour to throw some light upon the real mode by which it is effected. H. D. R.

* Description of the People of India, p. 469.

GRUMBLING.

If it be no part of the English constitution, it is certainly part of the constitution of Englishmen to grumble. They cannot help it, even if they tried; not that they ever do try, quite the reverse, but they could not help grumbling if they tried ever so much. A true-born Englishman is born grumbling. He grumbles at the light, because it dazzles his eyes, and he grumbles at the darkness, because it takes away the light. He grumbles when he is hungry, because he wants to eat; he grumbles when he is full, because he can eat no more. He grumbles at the winter, because it is cold; he grumbles at the summer, because it is hot; and he grumbles at spring and autumn, because they are neither hot nor cold. He grumbles at the past, because it is gone; he grumbles at the future, because it is not come; and he grumbles at the present, because it is neither the past nor the future. He grumbles at law, because it restrains him; and he grumbles at liberty, because it does not restrain others. He grumbles at all the elements—fire, water, earth, and air. He grumbles at fire, because it is so dear; at water, because it is so foul; at the earth, in all its combinations of mud, dust, bricks, and sand; and at the air, in all its conditions of hot or cold, wet or dry. All the world seems as if it were made for nothing else than to plague Englishmen, and set them a-grumbling. The Englishman must grumble at nature for its rudeness, and at art for its innovation; at what is old, because he is tired of it; and at what is new, because he is not used to it. He grumbles at everything that is to be grumbled at; and when there is nothing to grumble at, he grumbles at that. Grumbling cleaves to him in all the departments of life; when he is well, he grumbles at the cook; and when he is ill, he grumbles at the doctor and nurse. He grumbles in his amusements, and he grumbles in his devotion; at the theatres he grumbles at the players, and at church he grumbles at the parson. He cannot for the life of him enjoy a day's pleasure without grumbling. He grumbles at his enemies, and he grumbles at his friends. He grumbles at all the animal creation, at horses when he rides on them, at dogs when he shoots with them, at birds when he misses them, at pigs when they squeak, at asses when they bray, at geese when they cackle, and at peacocks when they scream. He is always on the look-out for something to grumble at; he reads the newspapers, that he

may grumble at public affairs; his eyes are always open to look for abominations; he is always pricking up his ears to detect discords, and snuffing up the air to find stinks. Can you insult an Englishman more than by telling him he has nothing to grumble at? Can you by any possibility inflict a greater injury upon him than by convincing him he has no occasion to grumble? Break his head, and he will forget it; pick his pocket, and he will forgive it, but deprive him of his privilege of grumbling, you more than kill him—you expatriate him. But the beauty of it is, you cannot inflict this injury on him; you cannot by all the logic ever invented, or by all the arguments that ever were uttered, convince an Englishman that he has nothing to grumble at; for if you were to do so, he would grumble at you so long as he lived for disturbing his old associations. Grumbling is a pleasure which we all enjoy more or less, but none, or but few, enjoy it in all the perfection and completeness of which it is capable. If we were to take a little more pains, we should find, that having no occasion to grumble, we should have cause to grumble at everything. But we grow insensible to a great many annoyances, and accustomed to a great many evils, and think nothing of them. What a tremendous noise there is in the city, of carts, coaches, drays, waggons, barrel-organs, fish-women, and all manner of abominations, of which they in the city take scarcely any notice at all! How badly are all matters in government and administration conducted! What very bad bread do the bakers make! What very bad meat do the butchers kill! In a word, what is there in the whole compass of existence that is good? What is there in human character that is as it should be? Are we not justified in grumbling at everything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth? In fact, gentle reader, is the world formed or governed half so well as you or I could form or govern it?—*From a newspaper.*

VULGARITY.

THE very essence of vulgarity, after all, consists merely in one error—in taking manners, actions, words, opinions, on trust from others, without examining one's own feelings, or weighing the merits of the case. It is coarseness or shallowness of taste, arising from want of individual refinement, together with the confidence and presumption inspired by example and numbers. It may be defined to be a prostitution of the mind or body to ape the more or less obvious defects of others, because by so doing we shall secure the suffrages of those we associate with. To affect a gesture, an opinion, a phrase, because it is the rage with a large number of persons, or to hold it in abhorrence because another set of persons very little, if at all, better informed, cry it down to distinguish themselves from the former, is in either case equal vulgarity and absurdity. A thing is not vulgar merely because it is common. It is common to breathe, to see, to feel, to live. Nothing is vulgar that is natural, spontaneous, unavoidable. Grossness is not vulgarity, ignorance is not vulgarity, awkwardness is not vulgarity; but all these become vulgar when they are affected and shown off on the authority of others, or to fall in with the fashion or the company we keep. Caliban is coarse enough, but surely he is not vulgar. We might as well spurn the clod under our feet, and call it vulgar. Cobbett is coarse enough, but he is not vulgar. He does not belong to the herd. Nothing real, nothing original, can be vulgar; but I should think an imitator of Cobbett a vulgar man. Simplicity is not vulgarity; but the looking to imitation or affectation of any sort for distinction is. A Cockney is a vulgar character, whose imagination cannot wander beyond the suburbs of the metropolis. An aristocrat, also, who is always thinking of the High Street, Edinburgh, is vulgar. We want a name for this last character. An opinion is often vulgar that is stewed in the rank breath of the rabble; but it is not a bit purer or more refined for having passed through the well-cleansed teeth of a whole court. The inherent vulgarity lies in the having no other feeling on any subject than the crude, blind, headlong, gregarious notion acquired by sympathy with the mixed multitude, or with a fastidious minority, who are just as insensible to the real truth, and as indifferent to every thing but their own frivolous pretensions. The upper are not wiser than the lower orders, because they resolve to differ from them. The fashionable have the advantage of the unfashionable in nothing but the fashion. The true vulgar are the persons who have a horrible dread of daring to differ from their

clique—the herd of pretenders to what they do not feel, and to do what is not natural to them, whether in high or low life. To belong to any class, to move in any rank or sphere of life, is not a very exclusive distinction or test of refinement. Refinement will in all classes be the exception, not the rule; and the exception may occur in one class as well as another. A king is but a man with a hereditary title. A nobleman is only one of the House of Peers. To be a knight or alderman—above all, to desire being either, is confessedly a vulgar thing. The king made Walter Scott a baronet, but not all the power of the Three Estates could make another “Author of Waverley.” Princes, heroes, are often commonplace people, and sometimes the reverse; Hamlet was not a vulgar character, neither was Don Quixote. To be an author, to be a painter, one of the many, is nothing. It is a trick, it is a trade. Nay, to be a member of the Royal Academy, or a Fellow of the Royal Society, is but a vulgar distinction. But to be a Virgil, a Milton, a Raphael, a Claude, is what falls to the lot of humanity but once. I do not think these were vulgar people, though, for any thing I know to the contrary, the First Lord of the Bedchamber may be a very vulgar man. Such are pretty much my notions with regard to vulgarity.—*Hazlitt's Table-Talk.*

WINTER COMES.

Winter comes with screech and hail,
Piercing blast and thundering gale;
Far from frozen climes he brings
Sleet and snow, and blanching things.
He has trod the North Pole round,
Long in icy fetters bound;
Swept by Greenland's frigid shore,
Where the western billows roar—
Roamed o'er Lapland's ice-bound plains,
Where chaotic darkness reigns;
Resting on that land of woe
Where the Russian captives go;
Land where men of royal race,
Exiled by some tyrant base,
Pined in suffering, died in grief,
No fond hand to bring relief—
No bright eyes to shed one tear
O'er their cold and lonely bier;
Dying far from wife and child
In Siberia's stormy wild.

Winter comes—his footsteps tread
O'er the ocean's rugged bed;
As a ruthless conqueror he
Sends his storms from sea to sea;
Pity ne'er hath seized his breast,
Sighs do ne'er disturb his rest—
Shrieks that boom along the wave,
And mark the seaman's wat'ry grave,
Fail to touch his icy soul,
Fail to stop the billow's roll.
When enthroned as ocean's king,
Spirits of his triumphs sing,
Drinking to his sovereign power
In the fearful midnight hour,
From those remnants of the dead
That round ocean's depths are spread.

Winter comes, with giant stride
O'er the hills and forests wide;
From his aged brow he sheds
Hoary locks around their heads—
Mantles in his polar garb
Tree and flower and tender herb.
Not a leaf appears to show
Where the summer cowslips grow;
Not a bud or blossom fair
Scents with sweets the chilly air;
Not a bluebell decks the heath,
All are hid beneath the wreath
Spread by his unfriendly hand
O'er the dark dismantled land.
Gardens once so bright and gay,
'Neath the summer's solar ray,
Once so rich in lovely gems,
Hanging on their pendent stems,
Seem as some lone desert wild
Where fair beauty never smiled—
Where the light of summer's sun
Never touched or lit upon;
Nature lies all lone and dead,
'Neath old Winter's frosty tread.

Winter comes, and some rejoice,
Glad to hear his sullen voice
Booming o'er the crested waves,
Sounding through old grots and caves—
Sighing 'mid the forest trees,
Not in songs of summer's breeze,
But like mournings for the dead,
That as fairy flowers have fled;
Mounting o'er the mountain's brow,
Where the oak-tree's trembling bough,

Rushing through the wooded glen,
Sweeping o'er the frightsome fen.
This is joy to hearts that know
Nothing of the drifting snow,
But beside the glowing hearth
Spend the hours in joy and mirth,
Laughing at the well-told tale,
While without the rising gale
Sweeps in furious mood along,
Heedless of their boisterous song.

Winter comes—and sorrow brings
On his dark foreboding wings,
To the poor lone helpless child
On whom fortune never smiled,
To the wretched cots and cells
Where want's abject sufferer dwells.
Round them he does cast his reins,
O'er them brings his woes and pains.
O! ye lordlings of the earth,
Freed from pinching want by birth,
Let your bosoms heave one sigh
For the poor whose piercing cry
Calls for sympathy from all,
Loud as human woes can call,
Plead with you on every mind
To be moved with mercy kind;
Supplicates for help to save
Suffering equals from the grave.
Hear, O hear their melting cries
Rising upward to the skies;
Hear, and let the good which heaven
Kindly to your hands hath given,
Aid in promptly helping those
Steep in poverty and woes;
Then when earthly days are fled,
And the joys (now dark and dead)
Cease for ever from your eyes,
May you live beyond the skies;
May you hear your Saviour say,
Come, my servants, come away;
Enter in and seize your crown,
Be partakers of my throne;
For on earth you loved your lord;
Hearken'd to his every word—
Heard his suffering children cry,
Wiped the tear-drops from their eye—
Inasmuch as thus your love,
Round their troubled souls did move,
So to me that love was given
Enter in with me to heaven.

Coleraine, December 1840.

S. A.

TALES OF MY CHILDHOOD,

BY JOHN KEEGAN.

NO. I.—THE BOCCOUGH RUADH.

A TRADITION OF POOR-MAN'S BRIDGE.

“When ghosts, as cottage maids believe,
Their pebbled beds permitted leave,
And goblins haunt, from fire or fen,
Or mine or flood, the walks of men.”—COLLINS.

ONE evening last winter—a holiday evening too—when the western wind was sweeping on wild pinions from the grey hills of Tipperary, athwart the rich and level plains of the Queen's County, when the blast roared down in the chimney, and the huge rain-drops pattered saucily against the four tiny panes which constituted the little kitchen window, I was sitting in the cottage of a neighbouring peasant, amid a small but happy group of village rustics, and enjoying with them that enlivening mirth and sinless delight which I have never found any where but at the fireside of an Irish peasant. The earthen floor was well scrubbed over; the “brullaws ov furnithure” were arranged with more than usual tidiness, and even the crockery on the well-scoured dresser reflected the ruddy glare of the red fire with redoubled brilliancy, and glittered and glistened as merrily as if they felt conscious of the calm and tranquillity of that happy scene. And happy indeed was that scene, and happy was that time, and happier still the hearts of the laughing rustics by whom I was on that occasion surrounded, and amongst whom I have spent the lightest and happiest hours of my existence.

It was, as I said, a wild night, but even the violence of the weather abroad gave an additional relish to the enjoyments within. The blast whistled fiercely in the bawn and in the haggard, but the huge fire blazed brightly on the hearth-stone. The rain fell in torrents; but, as one of the company chucklingly remarked, “the wrong side ov the house was out,” and I myself mentally exclaimed with Tam o' Shanter,

“The storm without may roar and rustle,
We do not mind the storm a whistle.”

Whilst, to wind up the climax of our happiness, a gossoon